

**CHARTER REVISION BOARD MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
October 1, 2009**

Meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. on the above date, City Commission Meeting Room of City Hall.

Roll call showed:

Present: Alain Jean
Mark E. Ketcham
Maria Del Rosario Lescano
Judy Stern (arrived at 5:43 p.m.)

Absent: E. Clay Shaw

Also Present:	City Manager	George Gretsas
	City Auditor	John Herbst
	City Clerk	Jonda K. Joseph
	City Attorney	Harry A. Stewart

The City Attorney served as chairman pro tem for the purpose of electing a chair. Nominations were opened. Mr. Ketcham was elected chair and Ms. Lescano was elected vice chair.

Approve Minutes – June 24, 2008

In response to Mr. Jean, the City Attorney explained that because the previous board is no longer seated, the minutes need to be considered by this board. The June 24, 2008 meeting minutes were approved as submitted by unanimous vote. Ms. Stern was not present.

At Chairman Ketcham's request, the City Attorney suggested the board read the Better Meetings handbook on conducting public meetings and the Florida Sunshine Law. The board's function is to review whatever issue may be assigned to the board by the Commission; accept public input on charter revisions; and discuss any charter issues from amongst the membership. It is not appropriate for members to discuss matters outside of the board meetings. The City Auditor recommended to the Commission a five-year forecast and the Commission suggested the board consider that as an amendment to the charter and that is all that is before the board at this time.

After discussion, the board decided to meet on the first Thursday of each month, 5:30 p.m. in the same meeting room unless it is necessary to change meeting rooms. The next meeting will be Thursday, November 5, 2009, 5:30 p.m.

The City Attorney advised that June is the latest for items to be submitted for placement on the November ballot, therefore the board would need to submit their recommendation to the Commission in May. The Commission would need to enact an ordinance that requires two readings. The City Clerk believed the submittal deadline is the third week in June.

In response to Chairman Ketcham's question, the City Attorney explained if one member wished to discuss a topic at a meeting, he or she would contact his office and it would be scheduled on the agenda. If the others did not wish to discuss it, there would be no quorum. (Ms. Stern arrived)

Proposed Five-Year Finance Plan for City

The City Auditor explained this considered a recommended best practice by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Many state and local governments adhere to it. He provided an overview of his memorandum to the board (08/09-15). He suggested placement of this language in that portion of the charter that addresses the annual budget, Section 9.02, City manager's budget message and recommendations.

Ms. Stern asked about changing the July date for the City Manager's submittal of the budget. She referred to the zero based budgeting goal and what has been done by Broward County. The City Auditor noted there is no start date for the budget process, so it could be started sooner. The final millage and revenue figures cannot be determined until the Property Appraiser has formally notified the City of the taxable values, which he believed is July 1. This is the end of the process and dictates when the final budget can take place. In response to the City Manager, Ms. Stern clarified the budget proposal could be submitted earlier. The City Manager cautioned the board to not interfere with decisions that have traditionally been left to the Commission. He did not think the charter is the appropriate place for a decision on when staff should prepare for the first workshop, which depends on circumstances. In response to Mr. Stern's comment about the suggestion helping with the zero based budgeting approach and that the hearings are only held in September, the City Manager noted the City Auditor and members of the Budget Advisory Board have maintained that zero based budgeting is not done every year. He did not think the charter should be designed based on one budget technique that depends on circumstances and the environment. Chairman Ketcham thought if that was very important to the Commission, they would have so directed the City Manager. He questioned whether it is necessary to add this to the charter.

Chairman Ketcham asked if there is any potential down side to a five-year financial forecast. The City Auditor did not think there is any down side. He offered an example from the City of Jacksonville that occurred with the lack of long range planning and new fire stations and libraries. It would not be a static document. It could almost be guaranteed that years four and five will not come true. Planning for years four and five and adapting as that point in time approaches will lead to a better outcome.

In response to Ms. Lescano, the City Auditor indicated that work on a five-year forecast could begin immediately and be integrated into the annual budget. For example, the five-year capital improvement plan is integrated in terms of the first year.

In response to Chairman Ketcham, the City Attorney explained the process for proceeding with the Auditor's recommendation and recommended the board meet at least every couple of months until there is something from the public that would generate some interest or the Commission sends additional directives.

Motion by Ms. Stern, seconded by Mr. Jean, directing the City Attorney to draft an ordinance pursuant to the City Auditor's recommendation (see Memorandum 08/09-15), carried unanimously. 4-0

Public Input

Richard Mancuso, Fort Lauderdale resident, suggested the board review issues that went before the previous board. He asked about publicizing for additional input. The City Attorney noted how the meetings are noticed. He felt it would be preferable to bring suggestions to the board at the meetings. Concerning the previous board's recommendations, they were not brought to this board because they were presented to the Commission who then decided what issues to place on the ballot. Those issues that were not placed on the ballot were considered rejected and were therefore not presented to this board for re-hashing. Mr. Mancuso did not think that the board voted on many of the issues raised because meetings were canceled. Ms. Stern pointed out that the most recent board only addressed issues directed by the Commission.

Chairman Ketcham indicated if there is an old proposal that Mr. Mancuso would like to bring forward, he should present it. The City Attorney indicated if Mr. Mancuso would provide him with any proposals he would like to submit, they would be included in the board's agenda packet for the next meeting.

In response to Ms. Stern, the City Clerk advised that staff has a list of publicity tools that could be used to announce that this board has reconvened and is meeting. Chairman Ketcham was also interested in a notice mailed to the civic associations.

Chairman Ketcham asked that members notify staff if they cannot attend a meeting.

Issues for future agendas

Old Business

New Business

Ms. Stern suggested a joint workshop with the Commission. The City Attorney indicated that might be helpful after the board has met once again, however, the Commission has not been shy about bringing forward their issues. Ms. Stern felt the Commission has been occupied with the budget, but these comments would bring this topic to their attention.

Chairman Ketcham wanted to follow the City Attorney's advice of having another meeting and for members to speak to their respective commissioners to find out if they have any concerns. Ms. Stern commented about the difficulty of scheduling a meeting and as such suggested something six weeks into the future. The City Attorney indicated staff could begin to work on scheduling a workshop in late November, early December. Ms. Stern wanted to aim for prior to Thanksgiving.

There being no other matters to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.